

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8402
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
DIA WASHINGTON DC//AT-6/DB-3D/DC-4A/JSI-5B//

S E C R E T ACCRA 09546

NORFORN

DAKAR FOR FAA

E.O.12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PBTS, MOPS, EAIR, GH
SUBJ: GHANA WARNS AGAINST AIRSPACE INTRUSIONS; FRENCH
- REPORTEDLY CULPRITS

1. (C) WHAT APPEARED AT FIRST TO BE A BIZARRE OVER-
REACTION BY THE GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT TO POSSIBLE SIGHTINGS
OF UFO'S SEEMS NOW TO HAVE BEEN A SERIOUS REACTION TO
REAL INTRUSIONS INTO GHANA'S AIRSPACE, ALLEGEDLY BY
FRENCH AIRCRAFT.

2. (U) IN A NOTE ADDRESSED TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CON-
SULAR MISSIONS IN ACCRA OCT 31, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY
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REFERRED TO "THE INCREASING VIOLATION OF GHANA'S AIRSPACE
BY FOREIGN AIRCRAFT," ADDING THAT THE VIOLATIONS "REACHED
A PEAK" OCT 29 AND 30. ALL MISSIONS WERE ASKED TO INFORM
THEIR GOVERNMENTS OF THE GHANAIAN GOVERNMENT'S SERIOUS
CONCERN, AND WERE WARNED THAT "COUNTRIES OF ANY AIRCRAFT
WHICH VIOLATE GHANA'S AIRSPACE IN FUTURE WILL BE HELD

FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONSEQUENCES...."

3. (C) FOREIGN SECRETARY DR. OBED ASAMOAH CONVOKED ALL CHIEFS OF MISSION LATE IN THE AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 1 TO MAKE THE SAME POINTS PERSONALLY AND TO ASK THE CORPS TO ADVISE THEIR RESPECTIVE AIRLINES WHICH FLY WITHIN THIS AREA THAT GHANA WOULD TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT ITS SOVEREIGNTY. HE SAID THE WARNING APPLIED TO BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY FLIGHTS. ALTHOUGH HE FAILED TO SPELL OUT WHAT STEPS GHANA CONTEMPLATED, HE INDICATED THAT THEY DID NOT INCLUDE SHOOTING DOWN COMMERCIAL AIRLINERS. (COMMENT: GHANA'S ABILITY TO INTERCEPT INTRUDERS IS VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT.)

4. (S/NFN) ON NOV 2 A RELIABLE SOURCE TOLD OUR DEFENSE ATTACHE THAT THE INTRUSIONS WERE BY THREE FRENCH MILITARY PLANES. THE FLIGHTS POSSIBLY ORIGINATED AND ENDED IN TOGO THE EVENING OF OCT 29. ONE OF THE PLANES ALLEGEDLY DISCHARGED A ROCKET THAT EXPLODED WITHIN GHANAIAN AIRSPACE NEAR DEVO. THERE WAS ALSO A UTA SCHEDULED FLIGHT BETWEEN LOME AND PARIS JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT OCT 29.

5. (C) THE PILOT OF THE DAO C-12, WHICH WAS FLYING NEAR KUMASI ON NOV 1, REPORTED PICKING UP RADIO SIGNALS APPARENTLY FROM PAN AM FLIGHT CLIPPER 118, BUT THERE WAS NO INDICATION THE PLANE WAS VIOLATING GHANA'S AIRSPACE.

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6. (C) COMMENT: APART FROM THE C-12'S PICK-UP, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY U.S. AIRCRAFT MAY HAVE INTRUDED INTO GHANA. BECAUSE OF OUR DESIRE NOT TO AGGRAVATE THIS GOVERNMENT'S SUSPICIONS OF THE U.S., HOWEVER, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO ASK PAN AM AND U.S. CARRIERS WHO OPERATE CHARTER FLIGHTS NEAR GHANA TO MAKE SURE THEIR PILOTS ARE ESPECIALLY CAREFUL NOT TO STRAY FROM AUTHORIZED FLIGHT PATHS. FRITTS

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